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INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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H C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4659
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P REFWITH FOR YOUR INFO DANANG 74, AUG 28, QUOTE:
USIA
NSC REFTEL: POLAD 61
INR
CIA 1. AUG 28 [redacted] CONFIRMED THAT [redacted] ALREADY
NSA DIRECTED THE PRIESTS [redacted] TO INSTRUCT ALL CATHOLICS
DOD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS SEPT 11. HE SAID THAT
AID PRIESTS WOULD PASS THE WORD DURING SERVICES ON SEPT 4 AND 11.

2. [redacted] CLAIMED NOT TO KNOW WHICH CANDIDATES INDIVIDUAL CATHOLICS WOULD SUPPORT BUT THOUGHT THAT IN DANANG VAST MAJORITY WOULD VOTE FOR SLATE ICD (REFTEL) COMPOSED OF BUI VAN GIAI AND NGUYEN HUU KIEM. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE EXPECTED THIS SLATE TO ATTRACT SOME NON-CATHOLIC SUPPORT.

3. [redacted] MENTIONED IN PASSING THAT KIEM WAS AN OLD CAN LAO MEMBER BUT THAT "WAS ALL BEHIND HIM NOW". HE SAID THAT KIEM'S

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PAGE 2 RUMJIR 4659 C O N F I D E N T I A L
MAJOR DRAWBACK NOW WAS ONLY THAT HE WAS NOT A CAPABLE PERSON.

4. [redacted] SAID THAT "MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN DANANG AREA ARE WELL AWARE OF ELECTIONS JT FEW KNOW VERY MUCH ABOUT PERSONS RUNNING. HE BELIEVES PEOPLE WILL RELY ON THE ADVICE OF THEIR NATURAL LEADERS (I.E. PRIESTS, VILLAGE HEADMEN, ETC.) AND THAT MANY WILL VOTE ON BASIS OF SYMBOLS RATHER THAN ON BASIS OF INFORMATION THEY POSSESS RE INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES. (SLATES IV'S SYMBOL IS THE WHEEL.)

5. IT IS [redacted] BELIEF THAT MOST BUDDHISTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE UNAFFECTED BY WHATEVER STAND RADICAL BUDDHISTS

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Leon Ingle DATE 10/6/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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TAN[illegible] TOWARD ELECTION. HE BELIEVES RADICAL BUDDHISTS MOST [illegible]TROUS IN HUE AND DANANG BUT IS CONFIDENT THAT IN DANANG AT [illegible] AUTHORITIES WILL BE ABLE TO CONTROL THE SITUATION. HE [illegible]DICTS A TOTAL VOTER TURNOUT OF "WELL OVER 50 PCT" THROUGHOUT [illegible]TION. HE POINTED OUT THAT COUNTRYSIDE'S FEAR OF VIET CONG WILL BE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO LARGE VOTER TURNOUT.

[illegible] HE SAID THAT IN AS MUCH AS BUDDHISTS DO NOT HA[illegible] CANDIDATES OF THEIR OWN THOSE THAT DO GO TO POLLS WILL SPLIT THEIR VOTE [illegible] VARIOUS CANDIDATES SPONSORED BY OTHER GROUPS. HE BELIEVES IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO ORGANIZE BUDDHISTS AT THIS LATE

DATE TO BLOCK VOTE FOR ANY ONE CANDIDATE.

[illegible] COMMENT [redacted] IS NOT OVERLY IMPRESSED WITH EITHER GIAI [illegible] KIEM AND HAS SAID ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT HE WOULD JUST AS [illegible] SEE "GOOD BUDDHISTS" ELECTED. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT [illegible] AT LEAST IS ACCEPTABLE [redacted] AND THAT [redacted] WILL LEND HIS SUPPORT TO GETTING OUT THE CATHOLIC VOTE. MAJOR BURDEN OF ACTUAL CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN, HOWEVER, IS BEING CARRIED BY OTHERS.

[illegible]OLAD FRANCIS GP-3. UNQUOTE

[illegible]DGE
[illegible]

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